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SUBJECT The CIA

MARTIN AGRONSKY: Carl, how reasonable is the indignation of the CIA Director, Mr. Casey, about the criticism of him by Mr. Durenberger?

CARL ROWAN: Well, I don't think it's reasonable at all. You know, the CIA never has wanted any oversight in Congress. Casey has the reputation on the Hill of never quite telling them the whole truth. And there is a conflict there that is not going to go away. But no agency of government ought to be beyond criticism by the Congress and by the press. And if Casey thinks he can get it, I mean he's way off base.

HUGH SIDEY: Whether Casey's right or wrong, or how good or bad the CIA, is one issue. But, in fact, Durenberger and Leahy, since they've taken over that committee -- they're the chairman and the ranking member -- they've made it a public forum. It is now like an agriculture committee. I don't think that's the role in the intelligence world.

JAMES J. KILPATRICK: Someone ought to...

SIDEY: Every time -- they're blabbing all the time now on television. They are...

ROWAN: What have you heard Durenberger and Leahy say on television that they shouldn't have said?

SIDEY: Every time there is an issue involving CIA, whether it has to do with Nicaragua or this rather despicable leak about the plot to destabilize Qaddafi, they're out there with long statements and woes and moods and attitudes...

ELIZABETH DREW: I don't remember them saying anything.

SIDEY: ...and comments about these things.

AGRONSKY: Where do you find these things that you're commenting on?

SIDEY: I hear them on television.

You go back to the days of Goldwater and Moynihan, very discreet, very infrequent their comments about it. It seems to me...

ROWAN: What do you mean? Goldwater has made some of the most castigating statements about the CIA of anybody who ever served in the Congress.

AGRONSKY: Hugh, Durenberger says of the CIA that he is concerned about the accuracy of their analysis of the Soviet position.

KILPATRICK: I wish he was concerned about the...

AGRONSKY: Now wait a minute.

SIDEY: Casey says that.

AGRONSKY: Durenberger's concern is something that I think warrants examination. Because if we are being ill-served by the CIA, which is Mr. Durenberger's contention, I think we should indeed look into it.

SIDEY: Why should that not be privately expressed to the CIA by...

AGRONSKY: Why privately? That's the nation's business.

SIDEY: Because we are dealing with a clandestine service here. Why should it be public?

AGRONSKY: You always buy that "jeopardizing the national security"...

SIDEY: I sure do. I certainly do.

KILPATRICK: I buy it as much as he does.

AGRONSKY: You do, too.

DREW: There's an endemic problem that has always been there. The CIA does not want oversight. It never did, and it

still doesn't welcome it. And Congress always feels that it is not being told enough.

However, I think both of these problems have worsened under the Casey CIA, for a couple of reasons. One is, I think that the mining of the harbors in Nicaragua, which the Senate committee insisted it was not told about, represented a real rupture. I don't think they trust him after that. He does tend to be more secretive. And furthermore, let's face it, he tends to be more gung-ho and interested in active covert action.

There are leaks out of somewhere about some of the actions. This is not new. And I think this tension is going to go on. But it's just worse because you have a personality clash and you have a different-style CIA Director.

AGRONSKY: And that is the last word, Elizabeth.